

been added to further define the etching method which will be discussed below.

For the Examiner's convenience, the following comments are provided to illustrate one example of how claim 1 can be read on an illustrated embodiment of the specification. It is noted that the following description is solely for purposes of example, and is not intended to limit the claimed invention only to the described illustrative embodiment.

Fig. 47 provides one illustration of elements set forth in claim 1. For example, the first wiring layer can be read on the elements 24 and BL shown in the figure (more specifically, 24A and 24B and BL1 and BL2). The first insulating film can be read on the element 27 formed over the first wiring layer 24 (BL). The second wiring layer can be read on the elements 34 and 56-58. In particular, the first conductor film can be read on the layer 34 while the first film can be read on the layer 58 (noting, for example, how the first film 58 is formed over the first conductor film 34 in the lefthand portion of Fig. 47). Next, a second insulating film can be read on the film 35 formed over the second wiring layer. Finally, the first contact hole formed on the second wiring layer in the second insulating film 35 can be read on the contact holes 36 and 37 shown in Fig. 47. As can be seen, these contact holes 36 and 37 penetrate the second insulating film 35 to come in contact with the first conductor film 34 of the second wiring layer. On the other hand, a second contact hole can be read on the hole 38 shown in Fig. 47. This second contact hole penetrates both the first insulating film 27 and

the second insulating film 35 to come into contact with the first wiring layer 24 (e.g., see the righthand side of Fig. 47).

An important aspect of the invention claimed in claim 1 is that the second contact hole is prevented from penetrating the first conductor film 34 of the second wiring layer. This is achieved by the portion of claim 1 which defines that the first and second contact holes are formed:

"by an etching method through the openings of the first etching mask, wherein the etching ratio of the first film by the etching method is smaller than the etching ratio of the first and second insulating films by the etching method."

By virtue of the fact that the etching rate of the first film (e.g., numeral 58) is smaller, the etching method will be slowed down by the first film 58 in the area in which it etches above the second wiring layer. In the meantime, the fact that the etching ratio is faster through the first and second insulating films allows the second contact hole 38 to etch through the first insulating film 27 to the first wiring layer 24.

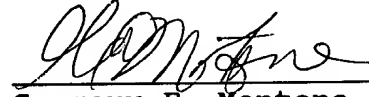
If the Examiner believes that there are any other points which may be clarified or otherwise disposed of, either by telephone discussion or by personal interview, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned attorney at the number indicated below.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the deposit

account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit
Account No. 01-2135 (501.35437VX1), and please credit any
excess fees to said deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Gregory E. Montone', is written over a horizontal line.

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